

A Light For a Tunnel

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A Light For a Tunnel

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The ship rocked gently through the vast innumerable stars hinted slightly by the blue of the nebula. The silver shimmered against depths of the inanimate space, and Riker stood watching. His crew, almost his entire crew, was lifeless and still. A few limp uniforms laid strewn over the once impeccable bridge, and now only the distant crying of someone stuck on the Turbolift could be heard. It was so familiar, yet so foreign. Riker, the impressive man of steel, laid dying in his old chair. Blood pooled from the wound on his right lumbar area, and he finally felt himself losing it all.

Imzadi...

_ _It echoed in his mind. Loud, strong, defiant, and promising.

—

Imzadi...don't go...

—

As he closed his eyes and tried to imagine who that could be, he suddenly found himself whispering, "Deanna."

Imzadi, don't....no.....

— —

Deanna threw her entire side into the doors of the Turbolift, and

through the eerie darkness she heard a sudden gasp of air. It was Riker. She could feel him, fading from her being, slowly becoming dormant, and more silent as each nanosecond raced forward.

"Will!" She shouted at the top of her lungs, and she could also feel an entire crew draining, and dying. The only answer she recieved was the subtle echo of her own voice and bangings intermixing. The round room started to feel as if it was closing in, becoming tighter and tighter. Deanna held her breath unknowingly, and she looked above for an answer.

"The Escape Door!" She said slowly to herself, and the idea came to her as her eyes scanned the top of the Turbolift. It was either death by suffocation, or freedom.

First she planted her foot firmly into a railing on the side of the lift. It was hard to lift herself up, as she only held onto the dead control panels above the railing. Then, with one large hoist, she managed to cling to the wall and raise herself up just enough to bang the small door at the top open. One bang turned into two, and two turned into three. But finally, it swooped open, and Troi was left staring up into the dark chamber above the Turbolift.

Clawing her hand around the edge, she managed to get halfway up. Her legs no longer had the support of the rail, and she almost feel when she tried to get them up. But she immediately recovered when she leaned her legs out and over. She was clear, and she took a whiff of fresh air. Her senses felt sharper then ever, and so did her mind.

The turbolift had stopped in between two floors, and Troi could make out the carpeting of the bridge and its once grand ceilings. Power was still to a minimal in the bridge, and Troi knew that it would soon die out if she didn't get help from an Engineer, or anyone. She repeated her method for climbing up into the between the lift and the floor, and she soon found herself on hands and knees inside the Bridge.

Darkness clouded half of the large area, and only a dim light covered the main area below the raised part. The two bodies of the NCO at front were dead and tumbled over, and Deanna had to move around to see the others. She stood over to the side to see the Captain's chair, which was empty, her chair, and Riker's chair...

"Oh, Will..." Troi whispered, and then she moved over to the strewn body of the Commander. Riker was slumped over, bloody, and barely breathing. Troi gently tried to sit him up, but his chest muscles stiffened, and Deanna thought for a moment that it was over. But no, they soon relaxed, and he went on with his short and infrequent huffs of air. She checked his pulse, and she found none. She checked his wrist, and she found nothing but weak butterfly taps against his skin. With a sigh, she looked at where the blood came from. It came from his left side, and she gently pressed her hand to the wound to see if he had any response.

"Ugh," the sound reverberated from Riker's throat.

"Will?" Deanna asked, and she gently rubbed his shoulder.

He moved ever so slightly, and it seemed as if the pain brought him

to. Then, as she applied a little more pressure to the slick and warm mess of blood, he moved even more, writhing.

"Deanna," Riker whispered. It was as soft as the mew of a cat, and his chest barely rose as he took a breath to speak. Riker slowly rose, barely inching to sit back up, and Deanna helped him. She watched sadly, as he tried so hard to even survive, and she sighed deeply and helped him up as best as she could. But the blood and the sight made her heart wrentch.

"Riker, what, what..." Deanna stuttered, and then she realized that she couldn't remember. Not a thing, not a single thought as how the ship got into its condition, not a single clue to how she ended up stuck in the Turbolift. And suddenly, she felt short of breath again.

Riker collapsed against the back of his chair after managed to sit up, and he stared at Deanna. His eyes were empty, dead, and they didn't seem to recognize his Imzadi. The only thing left in his eyes were the blue rings encapsulating the dialated blotches of black.

"Riker, please, do you know me? Can you recognize me? What happened here?" Deanna asked, and she assumed that she must have gotten stuck in the Turbolift during a fight of some sort. But no, then where was the Captain? Her heart suddenly raced, and she gently shook Riker's arm a little to focus him.

His head swayed to the right, and then it rested on his own shoulder. "Deanna," was all he said.

"Will!" Deanna said in a more persistant tone, and then she felt helpless and alone. The light on the Bridge was becoming dimmer and dimmer, and Riker was becoming more and more distant. He was barely focusing his eyes on her, and he soon fell back over the chair.

Deanna, feeling short of breath again, let out a small cry and stood up. She needed help for Riker, and she needed it now. Blood was still pooling, and she looked down at her hand. His blood was all over it, staining her hand, her nails, and parts of her uniform sleeves.

"Computer," she said loudly. Her voice radiated throughout the bridge, and nothing responded. She suddenly remembered Life Support, and she felt even shorter of breath. Great, one more thing to worry about.

She moved her way along the walls of the bridge, and she slowly walked through the almost stark-darkness to the large LCAR display positioned behind the lower Bridge area. She stumbled upon something large when she approached it, and she caught herself against the display. She looked down quickly, and to her sick terror, she saw the large body of a dark-skinned being. Worf.

"Worf?" Troi said surprised by her own shaky voice. She moved from the display and bent down to her friend's body. He was flat on his back, almost as if he laid down himself. His hands were perfectly to his side, and she could see that his eyes were closed. But his chest was rising slowly and gently, and this relieved the Counselor.

Troi placed her hand over his arm, and she shook it gently. He didn't respond, and she sighed again. At least he was breathing.

She took her place at the display, pressing one of the emergency releases. Nothing at first, but then the light in the Bridge started becoming stronger. She readjusted it, and she saved the energy supply for Life Support. The light became a little dimmer, but then the air became noticeably easier to breathe in only a matter of moments. She took a whiff of air, relaxing, and then bending down to Worf's body once more.

"Come on, Worf, move you to some place safer," she said as if Worf was awake. She used her weight to scoot the Klingon over to the panel where he couldn't be stepped on easily, and then she folded his hands over himself to keep him comfortable.

"Deanna," the words rang out in the silence, and Troi stood up and spun around. It was Riker.

"Will!" Deanna said, and she hurried down to the lower Bridge. Riker was sitting up in his chair, his eyes open, and they followed the Troi. Deanna smiled when she saw him sitting against the back of the chair on his own, and she came over and wrapped her hand around the wound on his side. The blood was running thick, with a slow clot beginning to form. Riker was pale though, and his eyes now looked more alive ever since Troi readjusted the power to the Main Life Support System.

Riker stared at her for a moment, and then he said from a whisper to a hard choke, "What happened?"

Troi looked at him sadly, and she replied in a low voice, "I don't know. Are you in any pain?"

Riker clenched his teeth, and he nodded his head. Then, he looked straight ahead and stared at the black and Viewing Screen ahead of them both. There was nothing there but the vast stars in space, and the blue of a silky nebula.

There was a shaking of the ship, and the sound of the instruments going out could be heard everywhere on the bridge. People in the entire ship were in a wave of adrenaline, and Captain Picard sat in front of the strange ship ahead of them in space. It was a massive vessel, filling the screen threateningly, and Picard sat forward, tense.

—

"On screen," he ordered, and immediately it changed.

A Romulan appeared, dressed in a black armor-like uniform, and Picard immediately recognized it to be one of the delinquent Romulans of Rah'Tel. The thin scar drawn across the Romulan's face, over the eye, and down to the chin was the mark of the Rah'Tel.

"I am one of the Rah'Tel, Captain, Pic-card, and I believe that might know more about you than you would like," The Romulan growled. His tone was deathly, deep, and threatening.

"Yes, I am Captain Picard of the Starship Enterprise-D. What do you want from us?"

"Your blood..." The Romulan hissed, and the screen went blank.

"Captain, the hailing frequency was cut off," a NCO chimed from behind them.

Picard frowned, and he nodded, "Shields up, full force. We are in for a fight."

"Captain!"

And then it hit. It was a shake that started like an earthquake, only it grew stronger and stronger. From outside the ship, a force field could be seen being formed, all around the Galaxy-Class vessel, and then, it seemed over. Picard was tossed to the ground as the ship shook violently, one hit after another, each one a little more stronger.

"Captain!" The NCO's voice said again, and then before their eyes, the Captain disappeared. The only thing left was a beam of transporter-class technology.

Riker stood up, trying to balance himself from the chaos, and then the blare of the red-alert streamed through his ears. There was a hard blow to his gut, a sharp pain, and then darkness. The world of subconscious called him, beckoned him to give up and come into the sleep. He didn't feel himself fall, nor did he see the sudden flash of light as the Romulans came aboard. There were four of them, all beamed aboard by advanced technology unknown to the humans, or any other thing besides the Rah'Tel. But then his eyes drifted open, and he could see what was happening. His brain failed to comprehend.

They stabbed Riker, threw his body mercilessly to the ground, and then they blasted the NCO at the deck to their instant deaths. Then, they put a temporary lock on all systems, and considered the ship's crew left for dead. They immediately beamed out, gone in nanoseconds, and left the force field in a hurry to leave the doomed ship.

But they didn't lock everything. And the lock was only temporary. The Life Support System was still functioning, along with minimal power, and the only thing left to do was die.

—

As the powerful ship powered up and speedily blasted from the area, a terrible ripping of space could be seen. Worf was still on the bridge, dazed, and injured from the sudden confusion and calamity. Then, as he looked to the view window, he saw the ship leaving. The massive vessel left behind a trail of white, something Worf had never seen before, and in the darkness, Worf saw space literally tear apart from the brave new technology the Romulan group had developed unseen. The stars ripped from their places, and then a large blue gash in space opened up.

—

Worf collapsed, partly in shock, and another in confusive despair.

And then the View Screen went totally blank, and so did Riker's eyes as they closed for perhaps the last time.

—

Riker's body tensed up, and he looked to Troi. Deanna had been watching him, and it seemed that he had gone totally blank. As his eyes locked onto hers, she suddenly felt a feedback of images, a uniting of their souls once more. The images of what happened flashed into her mind, and she swayed a little on her feet. His eyes were so full of pain, so full of confusion and helplessness. She saw the Captain disappearing, and she saw Riker's best friend disappearing. She felt his sorrow, and his pain.

I should have been there...I should have helped him.

— —

_Deanna heard his voice, and she sighed. Then, as a tear ran down her face from the emotional feedback she was getting, she gently laid her head on his chest and wrapped her arms around his neck. She could barely get a good grip due to the back of the chair being in the way, but she soon lost herself in his warmth, his dying warmth. She felt it so sharply, and then she felt herself becoming a comfort to Riker. She felt her feelings of gentle maternal love being soaking into his heart, into his soul, and they were one once again as they both sank into a fitfull and short bout of sleep.

Picard woke up in a hard environment, his head pounding from the cold floors that he was rested against. His sense of touch came to him before anything else, and he felt a cold draft from in front of him. His vision was blurry in both eyes, and when he reached up to feel his face, he was repulsed by the feeling of wet lacrid blood.

"Umph," was all he could groan.

Then, suddenly, a shadow shifted and a large man stood before the Captain. "Get up," he said, his voice deathly and raspy with hate.

"Where..where am I?" Picard demanded in the best voice he could. It was arduous to speak, much less to speak loudly. He leaned his hand, and he propped himself to sit up. The whole room swirled before him, and he could only see the two trunks of the man's thick legs.

"In Hell," the man answered, voice unchanging. Then, one of the legs lifted and butted Picard in the side.

"Who are you? What do you want from me? And where is my ship!?" Picard said, and his anger only grew when the man kicked him. He was now becoming fully concious, and he could only focus on his ship and crew. He fell over again from the blow, and he struggled to rise once more.

"They are floating somewhere in the confines of the Delta Quadrant, and they are all dead. Now get up!" The voice said. "And me....I'm

your worst nightmare."

Picard lifted his eyes, and he looked at the face of his enemy. It was the cold and hard face of a Romulan, and the only thing Picard could clearly make out was a scar on the Romulan's face, running from the forehead down. "Rah'Tel. You are one of the Rah'Tel."

"Oh, we have a smart fool here!" He growled back, and he roughly grabbed the Captain's arms. Picard didn't have a choice to do anything but stand, and he struggled to his feet where he wavered and then stood still.

"What do you want from me?" Picard repeated calmly.

"Just come here, you little StarFleet Hole of a stentch," the Romulan growled.

Picard just stared at him, and he was led away into a corridor. He lost track after a while, and then he was shoved into a large area with wide floors and only a few steps. The corridor led into this, and then nothing else. The area's floors were like marble, and they had the intricate design of the Rah'Tel, and white steps of stone led up to nine chairs that were lined up before the large area. In all the chairs sat nine large Romulans, all wearing almost Klingon-like uniforms, and the one in the middle was the obvious leader. He was adorned with a large hat of a silverish fabric, and Picard was thrown to the marble floor by the large gaurds.

"You know who we are, don't you Pic-Card..." The large one in the middle stated. He shifted, and leaned forward.

"Yes, you are Rah'Tel...." Picard responded. He got to his knees on the hard stone, and he looked up. He wondered just how much of his face was stained red. "You are a band of deliquent Romulans, scarred in battle, and supposed dead after you didn't show your face for centuries."

The large leader arose, and he stepped down the steps to the Captain. He came closer and closer, and then he leaned down. Picard stared at him directly, unfearing, and the Romulan retorted, "And you, Captain Pic-Card...are wrong. We have not shown our faces because we have advanced, psychologically, physically, and..."

He pointed to the rows of nine Romulans behind him, "Technologically."

Then, the scarred alien moved, and he slapped his hands behind his back. "We have technology far advanced from your own, from the Federation, and from our own people. And it is the technology that will be the fall of the universe. Your crew is dead, and you too will cooperate or die."

"And what exactly must I cooperate to?" Picard said. His anger was evident in his low growling voice that reverberated off the walls.

The leader replied simply, "Call me Kli'el. My associates and I are going to have a meeting with you, very soon. Until then...."

The gaurds moved, and Picard stood to his knees. He looked at them

hard, and he was shoved to his feet and dragged off to the exit. Before he was led out, the large leader named Kli'el retorted,

"And you, Captain, can expect a kind punishment."

Picard frowned, and then he was led off to the dark room of his cell once more.

Troi rose from her sleeping superior, and she took a moment to recollect what had happened. She remembered, and then she rose. There was a stentch in the air, and Troi's nostrils turned as she realized that it was the stentch of the two dead bodies of the NCOs. She looked to Riker, who was resting comfortably in his chair, and she wondered if Riker and her were the only survivors with consciousness.

"Computer, life support reading..." Troi commanded.

At first there was static, and then there was a slight buzz. The voice of the computer came through, and it too sounded distressed, "Life on Enterprise NCC 1707-D has lowered approximately 150 officers, 30 seniors, and 70 civilian level. The remaining 50 are Starfleet Cadets. Life Support systems online and available. Unknown substance detected in Engineering sector and Bridge sector."

Deanna stood, and she knew that she would have to act fast if she wanted to save the ship, or at least try to.

The Captain sat agreeably in the large chair, and the LCAR screen in front of him buzzed on.

"Admiral Weston to USS CaBigon," the computer chimed.

"View screen," Captain Sharleii said loudly. The LCAR cleared, and the face of the bearded ancient Admiral appeared.

"Captain Sharleii," Admiral Weston greeted in a thick African accent. The dark man smiled slowly, and then he saluted.

"Admiral, good to see you," Sharleii said. He saluted back, and smiled also. Leaning forward he fixed his shirt, trying to look professional.

"Sleeping on de job, Captain?"

"No, sir, no sleep for me today," Sharleii joked back, and he nodded, "Is there something wrong?"

"Yes, yes, there is," Weston said. His voice drew into a thick and dark tone, "It is the USS Enterprise NCC-1707-D."

"A good ship," Sharleii spoke, and he adjusted himself. "What seems to be the problem, sir?"

"It vanished for a few moments yesterday, and now it reappeared on the outskirts of the Delta Quadrant. All systems but a few appear to be down, and we need someone to go out and investigate. We believe that there must have been a fight of some sort with some higher race, and it somehow created a field that transported the ship to the Delta quadrant. No warp fields are detected, and so it didn't fly there on

its own. It's very odd."

"Indeed, sir," Sharleii responded, and he felt his eyebrows turning into a frown quickly. How could a ship of that size vanish and then show up like that? And in the DELTA quadrant?

"Are you and your crew up to it?" The admiral stated.

Sharleii smiled. As if he had a choice.

"Yes, sir. We have the equipment and manpower to go through this, em hem, endeavor."

Admiral Weston smiled, and he nodded, "Very well Sharleii. You will have full attention of Starfleet Command when you reach the Delta, and we will have a full broadcast to your ship so nothing should go wrong."

"Yes, sir, nota bene," Sharleii laughed back a little. He adusted his collar idely, and then he watched as Weston rose from his seat and signed off the transmission.

"My head is killing me," Worf growled as Riker and Troi hovered over him.

Riker sighed, and he bent over. Worf had slinked back down to his back, and he was lying wide open on the ground. Troi stepped over him, and she opened the small First Aid kit they had found near the rear of the Bridge. Power was beginning to run out, and the lights were growing dimmer by the day.

"What has happened, and what is that smell?" Worf demanded. He raised his hand to feel the side of his head, and he groaned when he felt the blood from his cut.

"I'm not sure. The ship must have been attacked by something," Troi said. Riker and her had not said a word to each other since they had shared their experience of the trauma, and Riker didn't mention anything but the obvious fact that the Captain was missing.

"Worf, do you remember anything?" Riker asked in a slightly annoyed voice.

"No," Worf bluntly stated. He then was silent, and his face fixed as cold as stone.

"Nothing?" Riker asked again.

"Nothing! I said nothing, I meant nothing," Worf hissed back. But then he softened, and he added, "Sir."

Riker raised a brow, and he rose. He looked to Troi with a slight sigh, and Troi came forward to Worf with a hypo.

"Come on, Worf," Troi said in a gentle tone, "Relax."

"Relax," Worf grunted under his breath. "The ship is in ruins, and I cannot help in anyway. How can I relax?!"

Troi didn't answer, and she forcibly stuck the hypo's end into Worf's

neck. Worf's body soon relaxed back after only moments, and Worf looked at her with a somewhat spiteful look.

"You did not have to do that," Worf said in a plain tone.

"Are you referring to the hypo, or to the fact that I kept you alive and didn't kill you?" Troi replied back, and she smiled.

Worf looked at her with annoyance, and he stared up at the ceiling without a sound.

Troi stood, and the three were casted into a deathly silence. The tension became high, and it was broken by the sounds of Riker leaning into his chair under the pressure of his own wounds.

He could barely see anymore out of his left eye, and after each strike, he could barely keep himself straightened. The Romulan whipped him over and over with the long glowing whip, and everytime it hit, it would charge his mind like shock treatment.

"Why have you kidnapped me?" Picard kept demanding. Each time, he would feel himself becoming a little weaker, but he remained persistant through the whole trial.

"Where is the cargo, Pic'Card?" The Romulan roared in fury. One more strike.

Picard fell after the last bolt of energy surged through him, and he looked up at his antagonist. The Romulan was large, cold, and unforgiving. He only came forward after Picard fell, and spat in his face.

Picard wiped his face calmly, and he looked up with his good eye, "WHY have you captured me?"

"Where is the Cargo?" he roared back again, and then the massive Romulan kicked Picard.

Picard's spine bowed, and Picard curled up on the floor in pain. During the night, he had coughed up blood from the heavy hits, and now he felt as if his vitals were on fire. The fierce pain only grew each time he was kicked too.

"I don't know what you are talking about, Romulan..." Picard replied.

"Starfleet records show that you should have been carrying top secret records concerning the Romulan Federation. We need those files to overthrow the Federation and Romula. Where are they?"

"I know of no records," Picard choked back, and he sat up straight on the cold floor. Everything around him felt hard.

"Yes, you do. We arn't fools, you know. You HAD those records, and now where are they?" The Romulan persisted. He paced before Picard, and then he stopped and stared callously.

"Listen to me, I have no records, and I am not aware of those files you speak of," Picard answered. He felt his strength growing, and he tried to stand.

"We will not kill you until you tell us, and we will torture you until you tell us," The Romulan said, and then he walked away. He dragged the glowing whip of an unknown substance behind him, and then he turned before he was out of Picard's cell.

"You know, we have techniques for torturing that make Orions look like baby tigers. You will tell, and you will suffer," he said. Then, he walked out and slammed the door behind him.

Picard was left alone in the dark room. He was bleeding, but he couldn't tell from where. To him, everything was sore, bruised, and detrimented. He now saw why exactly they wanted to kidnap him. For some reason, they thought his ship had something, something that would help them to dominate.

The word repeated in his mind as he drifted to a light sleep. Dominate...dominate...dominate....but they hadn't found what they were looking for. And now, they thought that it was somewhere else, far away from here. Maybe he should just tell them somewhere false? No, he would have to wait, and then suffer torture before he did that. Otherwise, they would know he was lying. He could only hope that they themselves were lying when they said they killed his crew. He thought of Riker, and of his faithful officers. So many lives.

With a sigh, the Captain drifted off into a world of deep, unfeeling ocean.

There was a heavy hit, and the entire darkened ship shook furiously. The dimmed lights on the Bridge blacked out, and Troi opened her eyes. Her head was resting against Riker's thick chest, and she sat straight up on the ground.

Riker also stirred, and he was awakened fully when the tremor caused him to tumble off of his chair. He hit his side wound hard against the armrest, Grunting in pain, he grasped himself as thin blood poured onto his hands.

Deanna heard him hit something, and she looked around in the blackness, "Riker?"

"I'm...fine..." he choked out, holding his broken side. "Just a slight technical difficulty."

"Did you hit yourself?" Deanna asked back, and she crawled to his voice. Feeling around, she came upon his legs. She managed to stand.

"Yes," Riker replied, and his spine bowed like a sandwich. "But I think I'll be fine. I just opened the sore on my side."

"Ouch," Deanna said quietly, and then she tossed a strand of hair from her face. She felt Riker's chest area blindly, and she worked her way down to his wet side. "Here, just hold onto it."

"Thanks for the tip," Riker chuckled in pain, and Deanna sighed.

"What happened?" Deanna said loudly, as if someone would answer

her.

"I think a system just went," Riker replied. "Is Worf still alive back there?"

"I think so," Deanna whispered. She looked to the rear of the Bridge, which she could barely see. "Worf?"

No answer, but the slow breathing of the Klingon could be deciphered. Deanna slowly lead herself with her hands, and she tip-toed to the back of the Bridge. She walked until she came upon a heavy log on the floor, and she bent down besides it.

"Worf?" She asked the dark figure.

It moved, and two eyes looked up at Deanna, nothing more then two white spheres with a black darkness in the center. The cold eyes of the Klingon sent chills down Deanna's spine, and she noticed how ragged and intense they seemed.

"What do you want?" Worf said in a low growl. "Why is there no lighting?"

"I'm not sure, Worf," Deanna explained. She sat down. "Do you think you could find out why? We think a system went out."

Worf grunted, and he turned himself over. Deanna followed his silhouette with her eyes, and he slowly arose and kneeled next to her. "I am not sure. What happened?"

"There was a thump, and all the lights went out. Even the displays went," Troi nodded as she looked over at the various displays on the walls. They were dark and inusable, and the whole Bridge seemed like a ghost ship in itself. "Not even the frontal display is functional."

"Sometimes the ship will shut down systems in a certain order as usable energy is used up. First to go is sometimes the main defense system, and sometimes after that the warp core system, along with the display. Then, the lighting goes, and shortly after..." Worf stops as he looks around the threatening darkness, "Life support."

Captain Sharleii sipped his hot tea as he gazed out of the Ten Forward window. A pleuthora of stars shimmered, but they grew dimmer by the hour as the ship careened into the unknowns of the Delta. He sighed to himself, and his communicator beeped loudly.

"Captain Sharlerii here," he stated. A few people in the room turned and looked at him idely. He shrugged at them, and then he waited.

"Captain, we have found some a recent Warp Drive Field. There is another ship in these areas," the female voice said. "And it is a Federation ship."

"Is there any particular tracings the computer can pick up?"

There was a momentary silence, and Captain Sharleii's communicator buzzed to life again. "Yes, sir, it is the Enterprise-D. The field gets stronger as we proceed in this direction farther into the Delta.

Permission to proceed, sir?"

"Yes, Luietenant," he answered back. "Proceed, Warp Drive 2."

"Yes, sir," she responded, and then the link went dead.

Deanna searched underneathe the Security Panel in the back of the Bridge. She felt around until she came upon the small magnesite-nitron tablets. She took out a handful of them from the emergency panel, and she crushed one with the palm of her hand. Immediately it illuminated, and an eerie whitish glow came from the tablet.

"I found some magnesite tablets!" Deanna called to her two friends. She looked behind her, rose, and started to spread out some of the tablets evenly on the Bridge.

"Good," Riker said, "I think I have found an access point for an electroplasm system tap. I can derive some energy for the ship from that, but I first need to transfer some energy so that I can open a field."

"Okay," Deanna said, and she looked over to Worf. He was struggling to stand, and he looked at Deanna when he noticed her attention.

"Sir, I think the main system tap is located under the main view screen," Worf said, and he rested against a wall. In the dim light, Deanna could see his eyes staring directly at her.

"Are you in pain, Worf?" Deanna asked.

Worf held up his hand, and he said in a low growl, "No. I feel fine."

"Thank you, Worf, I found it," Riker called. He was leaned over the bottom of the view screen, and he laborously struggled to get it open. Normally, it would have been an easy operation, but since most of the ship's energy was gone, it was like moving a boulder. Troi bent down next to him, and she helped dislodge the panel.

"I have it..." Riker said, and he yanked it with a heavy pull. It snapped off, and Riker studied the lighted panel.

"Worf, why is this panel on, and nothing else is?" Riker asked behind his back.

"Sir, it is a part of the main life support system. It checks itself," Worf replied, and he slid to the ground.

"I see," Riker said, and Deanna watched his careful efforts. When there was a long low beep, Riker smiled and slammed the panel's cover back on. "Were you successful?" Troi asked with a smile. She looked at him and helped him up.

"Always am, aren't I?" Riker said mischeiviously.

Deanna chuckled lightly, and she turned back to the center of the Bridge. She looked at Worf on the ground again, and Riker sat down into his chair, "Too bad they don't install emergency hand acutators

near Turbolifts."

Troi sat down over next to Worf, and there wasn't much more they could do. She heard her stomach growling angrily, and she sighed. She felt tired, hungry, and confused. But another part of her was grateful partly in the fact that Riker has survived, and that Worf was still alive.

Worf stood up with great effort, and Troi offered him her shoulder. He looked hard at her, giving her a I-can-handle-it-myself look as he limped to his feet.

"Worf, you really should rest. I think you might be hurt..." Troi stated, and Worf glanced at her.

"I am okay, Counselor," he said, and he slid from her support. He leaned against the wall again, pretending to be comfortable. Troi could feel his anger at his own weakness, and she just sighed and looked to Riker. There was a sudden beep, and the air grew heavy. Something was happening.

The light on the Bridge abruptly burst into illumination. Riker jumped in suprise, and Troi swirled around to look at the panels as they one by one came to life. She smiled in plain confusion, and Worf struggled to his usual Security panel. He read it, and his eyes opened wide.

"Sir, there is another ship approaching us, and we have full power to all systems," Worf said in his official manner.

"Can you sense the ship, and its identity?" Riker asked as he leaned and looked back at Worf.

"Yes, our ship recognition protocol recognizes the vessel as the USS Cabigon, NCC-2134-B. Galaxy Class starship, fully functional. We are recieving a hail, sir," Worf replied.

"Very well, on screen," Riker said, and he looked to the viewing screen.

The view screen cleared itself, and the image slowly cascaded to the picture of a rough Starfleet Officer, with full Captain insignias. Riker frowned, and he saluted the higher officer that was on screen.

"My name is Captain Sharleii of the USS CaBigon. Sir, Starfleet has sent the USS CaBigon to investigate the wreckage of your ship. Our record readings show that almost all of your power ws out, but luckily we transferred power from the electroplasma system. I hope you are not alarmed by this," Sharleii explained, getting down to business.

"No, sir, we thank you for it. I am Commandor Riker, and it appears that our ship has been disabled. We have a large amount of casualties," Riker replied. "We think that it was a Romulan group, sir."

"Very well. Our readings of your ship show the casualty rate at around 150. Is this correct?"

"Yes, Captain Sharleii," Riker replied, and he looked to the two strewn bodies of the NCOs at the front of the Bridge. He cleared his throat, and then he continued, "The ship's Counselor, I, and Chief Security Officer have been stranded on the Bridge for..."

"3 days," Sharleii stated, finishing Riker's statement. "That is what we estimate from the warp field we found. We also have recently detected a foreign field, most likely left behind by the Romulan vessel that attacked the Enterprise. The field appears to be of advanced Romulan technology, and we are not sure at this point which Romulans attacked."

"Oh," Riker nodded. Leaning over, he grimaced in pain and said, "Our Captain has disappeared, sir."

"Yes, we also detected that," Sharleii acknowledged. He waved his hand at some officers on his bridge, and he said to the screen, "Mr. Riker, we will be beaming up the survivors on the ship to our ship in precisely 15 minutes. From there, I will send in some of my own officers to set up a containment field and properly handle the casualties, while you and the survivors receive adequate food and necessary medical attention."

"Yes, sir," Riker said.

"And then, we hope to find the Captain," Sharleii continued. He looked down at the PADD in the arm of his chair, and he frowned. Whatever had attacked the ship had most definitely taken the Captain.

"The Captain's name was Picard, Captain Jean-Luc Picard," Riker stated. He looked at Troi, who was watching. He lifted his brows, and Troi nodded, reassuring that the ship was safe and genuine.

Sharleii nodded, "Yes, very well. I will see what I can do. View screen out."

The view screen went blank. Riker looked over at Troi and Worf, and he sighed. His uniform was dried with blood, and they all looked like they needed 20 hours of sleep. The sudden change of the tide for Riker was welcoming, but also bitter. What if they were the only Head Officer Survivors? A part of him wanted to know who else dear to him survived, but the other part dreaded the fact that some of them could be dead. A silent conversation was held between Troi, Worf, and himself, and they were beamed up in a flitter of light.

"They don't have the FILES!" The large Romulan roared, and he slammed his hand down upon the weary Captain's head. Picard fell to the ground and couldn't catch himself, and the darkness immediately consumed his site.

The 9 Romulan heads sat in their large chairs, and they all watched as Picard fell onto the cold marble-like floor. Kli'el whiffed his hand effortlessly, and he hissed to one of the larger guards before him, "Take this doomed man away...for we made a wrong choice. The damn Federation has tricked us! Their records....they precisely SAID that the records had been on that SHIP!"

The larger guard came forward and dragged Picard to his feet. Picard struggled to stand, and he tried to get up alone. He just fell back

down, his limbs weak after the nights of blood loss, torture, and persistent emotional flogging.

"I...told you, we did not have the files..." Picard choked out as he was being led away.

"We know that, you lousy, useless baseborn maggot of space!" Kli'el roared again furiously. His eyes burned in frenzied rage, and he looked to his two anterior officers, who looked at him.

The elder one spoke, "We must do something. We are going to lead our ship and the selective of our race to victory!"

"Ah, fools. You should have planned further instead of being rash about this," the second one dismayed. He shook his head and looked away from his leader.

Kli'el rose from his seat, and he swung his carefully ironed body to his second officer. "What are YOU saying about our plans? Do you dare to call them 'rash'? You ungrateful..."

"I have said nothing of the sort! Your plans were rash, but you are not actually what that is..." the Romulan stuttered, and he tried to avoid the icy glance of his superior, "Kli'el..."

Kli'el raised his thick hand and slapped the officer. A hard clap echoed in the grand hallway, and the Romulan officer flew back from his chair and slinked to the ground. Rubbing his face in pain, he looked up in terror.

"You do not speak against me, or MY ideas!" Kli'el bellowed.

The Romulan said nothing. He just slid back up into his chair and sat silently. He didn't want death.

Kli'el stormed off to the point where Picard had fallen, and he paced back and forth, "We must threaten the Federation directly then..."

"Sire, I must speak against that. There is too much risk, and our ship would be blown apart in moments..." A voice said from behind.

"Oh, really?!" Kli'el said sarcastically, and then he swirled to look at the officers. "We are Romulans, dammit! If this ship is that useless, then why did we even build it!?"

"Sire, it was meant for combat and secretive services," another Romulan said. "To attack so harshly would be quite...well, demanding on our sources."

Then, there was a beep. Kli'el turned around to watch the messenger of the ship coming through the entrance. It was a female Romulan, her hair tight behind her head and her face in a frown, "Sir, we have news..."

"News of what!?" Kli'el answered impatiently. He growled beneath his breath.

"We did a rescan of the area around the Enterprise to make sure there

were no survivors, and we found some, sir..."

"What?" Kli'el stopped. He turned, looked at her, and stared deep into her eyes. "What did you say?"

"A rescan of the space around the USS Enterprise that the ship attacked has shown that there was a substantial amount of survivors..."

"No, that can't be!" Kli'el turned to his officers, who had the same look on their faces, "Can it?"

"Sir..." several Romulans said, but they were speechless.

Then, Kli'el lifted his head, and roared a ghostly sound of a dying hope. It resounded, and as Picard was falling to sleep in his cell, he heard it.

A slow smile spread across his face. "I knew they would be alive..."

Then, his consciousness faded.

Sharleii watched from behind the thin glass-like panel, and he watched the dark figure mixed in with the doctors of his ship. They were in Sickbay, and the Klingon named Worf was being operated on. The survivors of the tragedy were mostly in basic care, but a few were in intensive. The Klingon was knocked out cold, and behind him stood the shaken Counselor of the Enterprise, with the semi-healed muscular Commandor.

"Is he going to be okay?" Deanna said, and she tugged lightly at Riker's white tunic-like outfit. Riker looked at her, and he looked away.

"I don't know, Deanna," Riker said slowly and quietly. He sighed, and he walked from the window. Sharleii didn't notice them leaving, but he heard the Counselor's question, and he turned.

"Counselor?" Captain Sharleii asked.

Deanna looked to him with tired ebony eyes, "Captain Sharleii?"

"Do you know the majority of the survivors? I know this may sound demanding...but do you think you could find out some stuff from them?" Captain Sharleii asked. He kicked himself mentally for asking so soon, but there were some things he wanted to get cleared up.

"Um...yes, sir," Deanna said slowly, and she looked to her feet. She shook her head, and then she looked to Sharleii. "Yes, Captain."

Sharleii watched the Betezoid fidgit, and he sighed. He rethought himself, and he gently stepped forward, "Counselor, if you don't feel that you can...."

"Yes, sir, I can," Deanna then stated affirmatively.

Sharleii jumped a little, and he nodded. "Um, okay, Counselor. Begin

whenever you are comfortable, and feel free to investigate as to who survived."

"Yes, sir," Deanna said, and she turned and walked down a corridor. She vanished into the same one that Riker had, and Sharleii shook his head. He hated seeing such a beautiful ship being torn apart, and literally turned into a ghost ship. Sighing still, he walked down to the Bridge and thought hard to himself as to what to do next.

"I better get a long shoreleave after this," Deanna said to herself. Inside of her she felt a bitterness coming out, a bitterness of spite towards the situations. There was just so much stress. Guilt flooded her heart about Worf, yet a silent gratefulness weighed heavy in her mind about Riker. He was alive. And now her mission was to find who else survived.

She passed the basic care units where several Enterprise crewmen were sitting up, and Riker rested peacefully on a bed in his white tunic. The sight made Deanna smile, but she shook her head and kept walking until she came to Intensive Care. Here was the hard part. She glided into the first room, looking at the STATS display to the side, and she moaned under her breath. Barclay.

She looked at the figure on the bed, sleeping and still. It was definately Barclay. His hair still had a hint of blood on it, and three large gash wounds scarred his neck. She moved slowly over to her friend, and gently messaging behind his ear, she sighed and watched. A flood of emotions filled her, and she felt dread as the prominent emotion. If Barclay was the first, who would be the next??

Barclay moved ever so slightly, and his eyes opened slowly. The sound of a gurgle rose in the back of his throat, and he looked over at Deanna. Deanna looked a little closely, and she could see the pain, the suffering, the hurt in those eyes.

"Deanna," Barclay's raspy tone whispered.

"Shh, stay still," Deanna said, and she massaged the portion behind his ear a little more aggressively. "Your on the USS CaBigon, in the Sickbay Area."

"Oh," Barclay said, and then he rolled his head. "That hurts."

Troi smiled a little, and she leaned against his bed, "Sorry."

Barclay looked at her, and his face showed a hint of a smile, "No, that's okay Counselor."

Troi nodded, and she watched as his eyes closed and he drifted off into sleep again. She sighed deeply, and she walked away to the other available Intensive Care Units. The first two had two Luitenants in them, and they were both asleep. But as she entered the fourth one, she had to turn away to wipe her immediate tears. On the bed lied Beverly, her uniform still on her, and blood still running down the side of her head. She moved her leg, and two doctors who were in the room with her held it still.

"No!" Beverly's voice rang out. It was filled with terror, confusion.

It couldn't be Beverly, could it? No, that was her uniform, her face, her blood...

Troi turned and walked out of the room. She couldn't bear it. The flow of emotions filled her bitterly, and she gasped for air in between a short cry of tears. The pain, the awful pain...everything blurring. Everything...dying. Screams of the past...of the pain, of the DEATH. Emptiness, awful, horrible, emptiness.

Riker walked out of the main Sickbay area, and he heard a small cry from the ICU areas. He frowned, rubbed his head still groggy with sleep, and he headed that way. A doctor watched him as he left, eyeing him. When he saw Deanna in the hallway, leaning against the wall with her hands over her face, he melted. He rushed to her side, placing his sore arm over her, and to his astonishment, she didn't notice. She just kept her hands clasped over her eyes, crystalline fluid covering her face.

"I want tomorrow," she blubbered to herself, and Riker tried to coax her into his arms. She finally looked at him with red eyes, and she groaned. She suddenly realized where she was. She had been overcome with emotions, and she didn't even notice her heavy-set Imzadi next to her. It was just so unreal. Blood, everywhere, on her, on her hands, on her soul. Blindness, blind pain, blind screams.

She tumbled onto Riker's chest, and he held her gently. She sobbed and finally said audibly, "I'm so close to home...feeling so far away...so many shadows...different worlds. Oh my God....so, so far away..."

Riker gently braced his arms around her slender form, and he gently caressed her hair, "Deanna, shh...your lost in the feeling. It's okay, recapture the memories, it's okay. It's real, your not dreaming."

Deanna's cries stopped for a moment, and then she lifted her head and leaned it on Riker's shoulder, "I never know the reason why...I'm home, feeling so far away."

She trailed off. Riker sighed and he hugged her a little tighter. The feeling of her head against him, her heart beating against his own, her small body enwrapped in his, seeking warmth and comfort, "Deanna, I understand."

Captain Sharleii sat on the Bridge, and the NCO in the front called from behind his back, "Sir! We are being hailed!"

"Excuse me?" Captain Sharleii said loudly, and he frowned. That was not right.

"A ship suddenly appeared, Sector 244...it's Romulan-class, sir, unidentifiable. Apparently it's an unknown fighter-like ship," the NCO said, and he turned. His face echoed the Captain's.

"I'll be damned!" Sharleii cursed loudly. The woman to his left frowned and looked to him.

"Sir?" She said, and she gulped. "Er, Sir?"

"Tipol, get me a full report on this now!" Sharleii commanded. There

was a rush to the Turbolift, and the same NCO said again, "We're being hailed, sir..."

"Open the frequency!" Sharleii said, and he stood up like a brick. He stiffened his back, and he almost jumped when a large-set Romulan dressed in armor-like metal appeared. A scar ran down his head, and Sharleii glowered.

"I am the Rah'Tel, a Romulan-based group technologically more advanced and psychologically more powerful. We are disarming your ship, Mr. Sharleii," the Romulan said with a deep threatening tone. Shadows danced across his face, and Sharleii felt the blood run over his face. He had only heard rumors of a group like that, and that had been years back.

"What are you talking about, er..." Sharleii trailed off, but then he said affirmatively. "You try and take apart our ship, and we'll rip yours apart."

The Romulan snarled and sarcastically retorted, "Go ahead and try..."

"Full shields! Get me reports! Red Alert, dammit...get everyone to their stations," Sharleii said, and he stormed off to his chair. He sat down, watching the Romulan who just stared at him through the screen. Sharleii then pointed and said, "Fire full phasers."

There was the swift sound of the phasers, and the Romulan smiled sadistically. "You are a foolish Captain, even more foolish than Pic'Card!"

Sharleii icily looked at the Romulan, and as he was about to speak, the ship shook violently. It was their own phasers.

"Captain, they have some sort of system where the weapons used by the attacker are reflected and shot back..." a voice called out.

Sharleii didn't leave the Romulan's gaze, and he intensely growled, "Where is Captain Picard, what have you done with him!?"

"He is resting comfortably on MY ship, Sharleii, and that doesn't concern you right now," the Romulan said.

"Where is he!" Sharleii demanded, and he looked to the Head of Security, who was behind him. Quietly, he said, "Lock a target, find him, send in a team!"

"Yes, sir, I will personally go," The Security officer responded.

"Very well, take your best officers," Sharleii said, and he turned back to the scarred Romulan.

"Yes, sir," The officer responded again, and then he walked out into the Turbolift.

Then, the Romulan on the screen spoke, "It's useless Sharleii, your ship is doomed, and so is the Federation!"

Then, he was gone from the view screen. Sharleii sat in his chair, ready to respond, but it was too late. The screen cleared out, and the image faded into the image of the sleek Romulan ship. Sharleii growled, and then stood up in his fury.

"Captain!" The Security officer suddenly said. "We have Intruders, Sectors 4 and 6!"

"Get a team out there! Seal off those Sectors!" Sharleii said, turning and frowning.

"Yes, sir—but Sector 4 is Sickbay. We cannot seal off that area without risking injury to those inside," he replied.

"Damn," Sharleii said under his breath. He had no choice. "Do it, seal it off."

"Yes, sir," the Security guard nodded, and then he sealed off the sector.

Deanna heard the wailing of Red Alert, and then she heard the sudden shake of the Sickbay area being shut off. She pushed herself from Riker's arm, her eyes still cloudy, and Riker looked around. A doctor ran past them with a flurried look on her face, and Riker grabbed her.

"What's happening? What's going on?" Riker said above the blaring alerts and screams.

"This sector has been shut off—Romulans have invaded Sickbay," she replied, and she looked to Troi. She motioned for them to come, and then she said as she quickly started to walk away, "Come on! We aren't safe here!"

Troi followed with blind faith, and Riker followed, making sure that no one caught them. But then as they approached the room at the end of the corridor, there was a sudden flash of light. Troi watched as the doctor in front of her fell, and she froze. She whirled her head around, and a huge Romulan stared back at Troi and Riker. No help was in sight, and Riker stepped in front of Troi protectively. To his silent terror, he recognized the Romulan as the one who had hurt him before on the Enterprise.

"Hey—you were the one on the Enterprise that survived!" The Romulan shouted, and he came forward. Riker wrapped his arm behind him, and Troi closed her eyes, unsure.

"What have you done with my Captain?" Riker shouted back in anger, and his eyes flared intensely.

"Well, you'll just have to find out!" The Romulan snarled, and then he thrust his body forward to them both. Troi saw it coming and she fell from behind Riker. She screamed in surprise, and Riker was caught off guard. The Romulan threw a strong punch to Riker's head, and Riker fell to the ground. Troi gasped and she tried to get over to her beloved. But the Romulan threw himself onto her, and she kicked him in the stomach.

"You little—" the Romulan muttered in pain. He paced backwards, and he aimed at Troi.

Troi felt the sting, and then darkness overcame her world.

"Get up!" The guard to Picard's cell roared. Picard looked up, and to his surprise, Troi and Riker were out cold next to him. With his good eye, he could see blood coming from Riker's nose and a fresh wound on Troi's upper abdomen.

"My officersâ€¦what have you done to them?" Picard coughed out. He barely managed to keep himself up straight.

"They are being held captive, along with a few of your other officers. But don't worryâ€¦we will only be messing with you three," The guard said, and then he smiled sadistically. "Especially the womanâ€¦"

Picard felt an anger growing in his chest, and he kicked his feet forward with all his strength. "Leave them alone!" He couldn't think. He just kept kicking his feet wildly in confusion and beastly rage. These Romulans were savages- Rah'Tel bastards.

"Aw, Pic'Card!" The Romulan said in an evil laugh. He kicked the Captain, and Picard's body convulsed against the wall. He felt blood coming into his mouth, and he felt his neck going limp along with the rest of his body.

"Leave them aloneâ€¦" Picard groaned, and he fell. His vision was fading again, and soon he couldn't feel or see anymore. He blanked out once more.

Riker could barely hear, and he soon heard a cry that sounded so familiar. He tried to move, to escape the darkness, and his feeling began to come back to him. Riker barely moved, and he opened his eyes to the noise. His head pounded in protest, and then he could make out the image of Picard. His heart swelled with hope, and when he saw the Romulan kicking him, it busted like a bubble.

"Damn you!" Riker said in his strength, and his adrenaline gushed through his veins. He suddenly felt Troi next to him with a flailing hand, and he felt her blood. He looked at his hand, red, and then he exploded. Crawling and then fighting to stand, he pounced onto the large guard.

"Oh, you're awake," The guard said, and then Riker's fist hit him square in the head. Troi's blood wiped over the Romulan's face as Riker punched, and Riker threw himself over the guard as he fell. The guard kicked, and then he threw Riker's weakened body off of him. The Romulan planted his foot into Riker's fresh wound on his side. Riker felt the surge of lightning-quick pain, and he fell onto his back, disarmed. He bellowed and heaved with a sigh, and he laid back. The pain was too great. He reached back over his head, feeling blood seeping from the wound on his side. As his hand searched on its own, he barely felt the still soft hair of Troi lying behind him.

"I'm sorry, Deanna," Riker whispered, and his lips closed like steel. He felt so heavy, and he faded from the light. Darkness encapsulated him, and he was again casted into the jail of oblivion.

"I want a full pull on the CaBigon, and take them deep into the Delta with us. Get some false signals to the Starfleet link, and we will be

all set," Kli'el retorted to the round table to Romulans. He stabbed the small hunk of flesh below him, and then he shoved it into his mouth. "Excellent service!"

The thin female Romulan nodded and strutted away with the platter, and Kli'el smiled with lust. The nine Romulans laughed loudly at their plan, and then a Romulan to the left of Kli'el added, "A grand idea, sir!"

Kli'el eyed his lower officer, and he smirked, "And you were the one who claimed I was rash? Blah! You are truly the fool!"

The Romulan sighed abashed, and he was silent. An elderly Romulan then spoke, "Sir, I will create the false signals and override them into the CaBigon since we now have full control of the ship."

"Very well, my comrad," Kli'el said, shaking his hand in the air. "Do so, and you will get a full promotion."

The elderly's eyes lit up, and he bowed his head a little, "Yes, sir!"

"Dismissed," Kli'el then stated boldly, and he finished his plate.

Sharleii was a captive in his own wilderness. The Romulans had overtaken the entire ship, and now they had a lock on his ship, dragging its mass throughout the boundaries of space. And what could he do? Nothing. The Romulans guarded every door to the ship, watched his every move, and made him look like a fool. The only sign of help he saw was the link to Starfleet, something which he could only use if the Romulans let their guard down. The prospect was the only hope.

"What are you doing?" A Romulan guard snarled as Sharleii stared at his COMM padd on his desk.

"Nothing," Sharleii responded calmly and coolly. He had to fight fire with water.

"Fine," The Romulan retorted, and he turned around.

Sharleii sighed to himself. They had to sleep sometime—or there had to be some sort of distraction. As the Romulan guarding him looked outside of the office, Sharleii tapped on the COMM. It didn't beep as loud as before, and the screen came up. It was the symbol of everything he had lived for: Starfleet. In a rush, he went through the command list and signaled for help. The COMM was silent at first, but then confirmation showed up.

The guard turned around, and Sharleii leaned back. The COMM was lit up, and Sharleii looked away as if he had no idea what was going on. The guard eyed him, and then turned around once more. Sharleii leaned forward, read the message, and then commanded for advice. He ran down the list of situations and words, and soon he sent the nicely written message to Starfleet.

"You are doing something!" The guard roared as he whirled around and faced Sharleii. He slammed his hands onto the desk and looked at the COMM padd, which went blank as Sharleii programmed it to. The guard

frowned, creases forming in his face, and then he spat in frustration. He turned around again, and Sharleii went back to work.

The message of advise came up, along with Starfleet Command's instructions. As Sharleii read through it, a small smile formed on his face. He was going to beat the Romulans at their own game.

Sharleii walked down the corridors a few hours later, heading off to his quarters. He had another guard behind him, a smaller one, and he glanced back occasionally to see what the Romulan was doing. The guard only stared at him silently, and Sharleii yawned as if he was tired.

"I am going to my quarters. Do you want to watch me sleep or what?"

The Romulan's brow went up as they stopped, and he replied, "I have been given strict orders to watch and follow you."

"Heh," Sharleii snorted, and he turned, heading to his quarters again. If everything went as planned, the Chief Medical Officer, Kess, would be in his quarters, waiting there. Sharleii waited just before he was near his quarters, and when he was, he leaned against the door.

"Enter now!" The Romulan guard said loudly, clearly growing impatient with Sharleii.

Sharleii smiled, and then he faked a blow to the Romulan's stomach. The surprised guard defended himself with an arm over his abdomen, and he realized it was a mistake when Sharleii's heavy fist slammed into his head. He tumbled back, his smaller figure dazed by what happened, and he tried to double over and kick. But Sharleii grabbed the Romulan's leg, and he twisted it. The guard went flying over, landing hard on his back. He struggled, but as Sharleii came over him and stepped on his chest, he ran out of breath and collapsed limp on the floor.

"Computer, open door," Sharleii commanded calmly, and he kicked the Romulan's limp body. He rubbed his sore wrist, and then the doors swished open. The Chief Medical Officer was already at the entrance, with his arms folded over.

"Sir, you mean to tell me you single-handedly beat down that Romulan?" Chief Kess, joked. He smiled and laughed a little, and Sharleii motioned for him to be quick.

"Haha, Mr. Kess," Sharleii replied, and he bent down. With the help of the Chief Medical, they dragged the Romulan's limp body into the room and laid him on Sharleii's floor in the sleeping area. Kess already had instruments out, and Sharleii stood back as he watched Kess effortlessly extracted DNA information with his tricorder. Then, Kess looked to Sharleii and nodded, "It's all set. I'll inject you with the DNA, and it will take effect almost immediately. You'll develop all of the physical effects of this, er, creature, and it will only be temporary for about 2 days. By then, the modified DNA cells will die off and be replaced with your own cells."

Sharleii nodded, and he felt a lump forming in his throat. He sighed and sat on his bed, "Where will you hide this Romulan till then?"

"I will induce alpha-wave sleep, and I'll hide him in here, I guess. Do you have any better suggestions?"

Sharleii shrugged, and he started to lay down, "Beats me. Hereâ€¦"

He held out his arm, and he closed his eyes.

"Are you sure that you want to do this, sir? I'll gladly go in your place, you knowâ€¦" Kess said as he programmed the medical tricorder. He hooked up a small wire to the replicator on the side of the bed, and immediately a small hypo vile came into existence. Shaking it, Kess loaded it into the hypo and leaned over.

"Yes, just get this over with. Starfleet gave me orders to send someone who they think will do this rightâ€¦"

Kess finished, "And that someone is yourself?"

"Yes," Sharleii said, and he rolled his eyes. "I wonder how I got stuck with you. Just me me the details of this man and I'll be on my way."

"Yeah, me too," Kess laughed back, and he stuck the hypo into Sharleii's arm. After he had injected the lethal drug, he explained to his Captain, which was also his uncle, "Well, this Romulan's name is Hanuin Ru'ckjack. He is a Security officer for the Rah'tel, and he has a wife that serves the leader of the Rah'Tel, Kli'el. Quite scandalousâ€¦"

Sharleii groaned as his head suddenly felt light, and he looked to his nephew. "Kess, tell me, what are his normal behaviors?"

"I don't know," Chief Kess said shrugging. "My tricorder can only read the personal history, not the psychological history."

"Oh," Sharleii said, and he suddenly felt the effect of the tranquilizer kicking in, "Wish me luck."

"Yeah, yeah, good luck, Uncle Sharleii," Kess laughed, and he set the hypo down. He looked to the Romulan on the ground.

"Don't call me that, Luietenant! I am your Captainâ€¦andâ€¦" Sharleii groaned, and then he felt himself falling asleep. Darkness felt so sweet.

"Okay, you do that," Kess nodded, and then he plugged the alpha-wave inducer into the Romulan's neck. The Romulan jolted, and then went totally limp. Kess pulled the body into the storage area, and he sealed the door. Setting up a force field undetectable, he walked away and watched the slowly changing Captain.

Troi draped her arms over Riker's limp body, shaking her head. Picard was also asleep, only yards away, and the large Romulan guards in front of all three of them watched her.

"Who are you!?" The large Romulan growled at Troi.

Troi shook, and she looked over her shoulder. She frowned, and she said in a slightly shaking voice, "I am Counselor Troi of the USS Enterprise! What do you want?"

"We want the Federation!" The guard growled, and the two other Romulans besides him came forward and leaned over Troi. Troi got up from where she was, and she placed a hand over her wound. A dull pain formed in her chest, and she choked a breath for air.

"Your not going to get it," Troi said, and she leaned back. She groaned.

"Then we will get you," The larger guard said, and his face twisted in a cruel grin.

"Oh, yech!" Troi cringed, and she closed her eyes. The Romulans smelled awful, and their breath was intoxicating. As she leaned back some more, she felt a blinding slam to the side of her head, and then she saw dots in her eyes. She fell back onto Riker's body, opening her eyes groggily.

"Have you learned not to sass me, yet, BETEZOID?" The Romulan guard hissed, and he came forward. The two guards backed away, leaving Troi and the Romulan one-on-one. "You will die, if you do not comply along with your Captain, and your Commandor that you weep so piteously for!"

Troi was silent, and she stared at him with her ebony eyes. His words sent chills down her spine, and she just melted back. Her head hurt too much, along with her wound. They both pounded and hurt a little more with each heartbeat, and she ran her fingers down the Riker's uniform behind her back. The word "duty" resounded in her head, and she shook her head in disbelief. What could she do?

"Please, leave me alone," Troi begged, and she shook her head. Everything was getting darker. She closed her eyes.

Imzadi, come back. Help me, please! I need your help. Please!

--

_ _Silence, and Troi felt tears coming through her eyes.

Imzadi!!!!

--

The guard backed away, and he looked to his two other men, "Come on, she'll just black out if we torture her further. We need one to stay awake. Come, we'll come back later!"

The two men nodded, and Troi watched as they vanished from the darkened cell. After the door was sealed and locked with beams, Troi turned over and sobbed onto Riker. For the first time in her Starfleet Career, she hated her empathy. The rage and hurt of the Romulans ran through her mind, repeating, getting louder, twisting, turning, intensifying to a climatic scream. She only wanted Riker to wake up and comfort her, to take her pain away, to ease her. She

wanted to see Picard's eyes, his beautiful and comforting eyes. Just once more.

Hidden prophesy. That's what Sharleii felt like as he walked down the Romulan ship, catching himself marveling at the technology. Door were invisible glass-like waterish shields, and the floors were soft and cushioned. The walls were slim, and slick with metallic covering. He could tell that taking this ship was going to be hard.

"Ru'ckjack! What are you doing?" A gruff voice from behind said.

Sharleii turned, and he bowed his head a little at the massive Romulan behind him. The Romulan looked like a sanded-down Klingon.

"Hello, sir," Sharleii said, and he had to catch himself. His voice was deep, and it seemed mismatched for his smaller body.

"Did you return the Captain to his proper quarters?" The guard asked.

"Yes, sir...he is sleeping under the guard of, um..." Sharleii stuttered. He forgot the guard's name that had arrived at his room on the ship. Kess has copied his own DNA to himself, and Kess had taken Sharleii's place under his own identity.

"Under who, Ru'ckjack?" The guard hissed, his tone increasing.

"Eh," It popped into his mind, "Rey'Tah."

"Very well. Take a break," the large Romulan said, and he turned and swiftly left down a corridor.

Sharleii sighed with relief, and he continued down to his supposed quarters. As he came to the Deck marked 105-A, he walked till he came to the door. Walking into his quarters, he looked around at the real Ru'ckjack's collection of Romulan artifacts, decorations, and purple bordered cloaks. Nice, he thought. He walked over to a PADD-like thing on a desk in the back room, and he tapped it. He worked with it for a few minutes, and he found his way to a Starfleet Link. When he was successful, an Admiral Weston appeared on the screen.

"Sharleii?" Weston said. "Is that you?"

"Yes, sir. I chose myself to do this mission."

"Very well," Weston nodded. "If you get killed, it's not my fault..."

Sharleii smiled, and he sat back. "What do I do next, Admiral?"

"Get to the ship's inners, and set coordinates for the center of the Delta...you'll pass a ship, which I will be on, and we will create a sub-space wormhole with the warp drive. I'll work my ship into breaking the link with the CaBigon and that...Romulan thing, and then I'll transport you and the rest of the Captives to CaBigon where you will be safe. The Romulan bird-thing will then be lead into the wormhole, that is, if you set it right. If you don't, we could be up

for some confrontation."

"Yes, sir," Sharleii said, and he noted all the details. It was an easy plan, but yet a complex one.

"I trust that you are well, medically, sir?" Weston asked.

"Yes, sir..." Sharleii said, and he looked over. "Sir, I shouldn't be on the link too long. It could be traced."

"Very well." Weston said, and he waved his hand. "Out."

The computer went dead, and Sharleii sat in front of it, staring at the blackness. He sighed, and he rose. The faint outline of his new Romulan face was evident, and he took a nap before he headed down to the supposed Engineering section of the ship.

Riker woke up in a woozy state, all of his body spinning, and his mind pounding. His sight made out the faint outline of Troi, and he gently could feel her warm skin against his. He struggled to rise some, and he did so finally as he propped himself against his beloved. Troi was in a white tunic, stained with blood, and he was also in a white tunic. He frowned, and to his surprise, they weren't in the cell anymore. Picard was no where in sight, and Troi was sound asleep.

He stood, barely balancing himself, and he looked around more clearly. A bed was in the center, and a gentle white hue was everywhere. What was this place? Where were they?

Riker sat down, and as soon as his legs hit the ground, two Romulans walked through the corridor leading into the room. They fixed the force-field, and then they walked in. Not seeing Riker awake, they innocently went to the bed, and looked to them. Riker kept his eyelids cracked just a little, and he suddenly saw them beginning to lift Troi from where she was. Riker tried in vain not to frown or move, and he watched a little further. They lifted her small-framed body onto the bed, and they immediately began to reach for the top strap of her tunic.

Riker opened his eyes, and as they lifted her top off, he exploded. He rose with lightening-speed, and feeling the power of ten lions, he raged into the largest Romulan's back. The Romulan fell over Troi's body on the bed, and he tapped the computer. The smaller Romulan beat Riker's back, and Riker felt a sting course through his body. The Romulan hit the spot, and Riker collapsed to the ground, clutching and trying to feel his back.

Troi's body moved a little, but she remained asleep. She was content, and the ease of rest was too strong for her to resist.

"Deanna!" Riker called with all his strength, body and mind. He tried to roar her name in her mind, and with sudden success, her eyes popped open.

Deanna looked around at first in confusion, but then she reached for her half-naked chest. She clasped the tunic strap immediately, and she sat up half in pain. The wound was clotted in spots, but blood still seeped from it. She clasped her hand over herself, and she stared at the Romulans who were still kicking and calling security.

"No!" Deanna said angrily, and she flailed her legs out towards the Romulans bent over Riker's body. Her leg missed, and the larger Romulan caught it mid-air. Twisting it, he threw Deanna from the bed. She fell, her tunic falling over her head, and she moaned. The Romulan pulled the tunic from her face, and he snarled at her.

Then, three more Romulans came into the room. Two of them rushed towards Troi, who could barely move in pain, and they grabbed her arms. She watched them with an awkward stare, trying to contemplate what was happening. Then, she looked at the third Romulan. He was smaller than the rest, and his eyes seemed gentler. He came forward and he brushed the two guards off of Troi. When he bent over and pulled Troi to her feet, he looked into her eyes and raised his brows.

"Who...who are you?" Troi said in a whisper of air as she collapsed onto the bed, and she barely stayed on it. The two Romulans stared at the smaller Romulan as he helped her up onto it.

The Romulan spoke back in a whisper, "Be silent!"

Troi obeyed, and she tried to sense his emotions, and what he was. She could feel a familiar air to him, and her eyes snapped open as she realized who it was...

"Sharleii..." Troi said, feeling as if a burden was lifted from herself. "Sharleii..."

A Romulan came from behind and slapped Troi's face, and Sharleii didn't have time to respond. Sharleii frowned, and he pretended to praise the Romulan. But turning back to Troi, and then to the other officers, he sighed and raised his hand.

"I will take this subject to the holding cell," Sharleii said, and once again he was caught off guard by how he sounded.

The officers nodded, and then Sharleii turned to Troi. Riker was hunched over on the floor, blood forming beneath him, and Troi could feel her Imzadi's pain. She tried to block it out, but a part of her didn't want to. Riker was a part of her...a part of her blood, mind, soul, spirit, and fate. If she learned one thing from this trauma, it was their bond.

"Riker, no!" Troi muttered with the last of strength before she faded into unconsciousness.

Sharleii grunted and lifted Troi's limp body over his shoulder, and he turned to the officers behind him. He nodded, and he hissed like a false snake, "She will pay..."

The officers snarled and chuckled, and some of them filed out until there was one guarding the stressed body of Riker. Riker was semi-awake, and he moaned in protest as he lifted his head and saw Troi being carried away.

"Deanna..." he shouted, and he tried to reach out his hand. He looked up, and he growled.

"Riker!" Sharleii said, and he turned. He used his Captain's-tone-of-voice, and when Riker heard it, he frowned, perplexed. Groaning for one last time, he too failed to stay awake, and he hit the ground.

The guard looked to the Sharleii, and Sharleii frowned, "What are YOU looking at?"

The guard looked away immediately, and Sharleii carried Troi to his quarters, trying not to direct attention to himself.

Troi was lost in darkness, somewhere in between a battle of light and black. She could feel the screams of Riker, calling for her, for her body and presence, and she could hear her own protest mixing with his.

Riker....

--

He was gone from all contact. There was nothing left of his mind, right now at least.

Riker.....please, answer me soon. The Romulan that took me is Sharleii, I'm in his quarters. He's already redirected the ship's course, without the rest of them knowing it. Please, wake up...

--

_Nothing at first, and then the faintest of murmurs came into her mind. It came like a raindrop in an acre of field, barely noticable. It was like the hiss of a waterfall, only heard with a careful ear, and the light hum of the birds. Delicate, simplisticâ€|

Deannaâ€|

--

Rikerâ€|come on. Listen to me. The Romulan that has me is Captain Sharleii of the USS CaBigon. He's here to help us, and he's already managed to re-route the ship to a wormhole created by the warp fields of CaBigon's shipâ€|Admiral Weston will be on the CaBigon, and he's coming to get us and the restâ€|

--

Riker jolted from his sleeping position, and he woke up in a sweat. Almost immediately after he woke up, the guarding Romulan looked at him and held up the butt of his large phasar-like weapon.

"Stay still, Rikerâ€|" the Romulan growled, and he leaned over a little.

Riker looked up groggily and leaned back. He tried to move his jellowy legs, and he clawed at the floor. Everything felt so cold. Where was he?

"Did you hear me, you HUMAN?" The guard growled again, and he

threatened further.

"I heardâ€|you," Riker groaned, and he fell onto his back. His head pounded, but with every passing moment, things seemed to become clearer. He remembered Troi, falling limp in the Romulan's arms. He tried to move, but then he was struck down. As the hard hit of the butt rang in his head, he remembered an echo from his mind. Then, his eyes widened as his head fell.

"I heard youâ€|you Romulanâ€|" Riker retorted, hinting at his rising strength. Ignoring the pain all over, he sat up and leaned on his hands. "Give me back my Captainâ€|"

"Sirâ€|we have a full lock on Captain Picard," the voice of the NCO echoed in the Main Bridge of USS CaBigon.

Admiral Weston stood in his full uniform, regally situated with an African Swoop Band. Its bright colors hued the massive wormhole that formed as CaBigon careened at full Warp Speed. The tear ripped into the galaxies, and the trap was set.

"You have de full lock already?" Weston asked, and he sat down in Sharlerii's chair.

"Yes, sirâ€|full lock."

"Well, don't transport him just yet. We need to make sure the ship is close enough to fall victim. Let's just hope the lock on their sensors can keep the hold till the last secondâ€|" Weston said, and he sank down further.

"Captain," the doctor behind the main LCARS display said loudly. Then, he walked down into the center.

"Yes, Kess?" Weston asked, raising a brow. Adding, he said, "That would be Admiral to youâ€|"

"Oh, Admiral, I mean," Kess stuttered, and then he felt the color fade from his face. He smiled sloppily, and then he stated, "You know, it may be a great threat to Captain Picard's health if we further delay."

Weston turned and eyed the Chief of Medical, and he shook his head. "We will crash the mission if we transport him. The Romulan vessel would detect it, and we would be blown into nanobits."

Kess didn't respond, and he looked helplessly at the screen. Then, CaBigon turned and whipped behind the large Romulan ship.

"Sir! We have a ship detected, rearing usâ€|" the Romulan in tracking said.

Kli'el rose from his seat at full speed, and he barked out commands immediately. "Damn! Get the cloaking devicesâ€|check sensors again. This isn't right!"

The ship suddenly creaked as the shield systems went down, and Kli'el glanced around, confused and dazed.

"What the hell is going on?" Kli'el roared. His voice shook the

entire Command area.

"Sir, we are being pulled into a wormholeâ€|its source is the ship's warp fields behind us."

"Turn around! Turn around! Fire! Full course, work as a unit, NOW!" Kli'el said, and then the entire ship shook.

An eerie quiet filled Sharleii's quarters on board the Romulan ship, and Deanna huddled on the bed. She closed her eyes, trying repeatedly to contact her Imzadi. She needed to know if he was okay. He didn't respond, and he seemed so far off.

"Counselor," Sharleii said in his normal non-Romulan voice, "Please relax. My ship is fully equipped and is one of the most recently built. We'll beat this ship."

"What's happening?" Troi asked, and she looked at him. His hard Romulan features made her shiver, and she could barely believe him when he had told her his true identity.

"We appear to be coming near the wormholeâ€|thank God it was created successfully. The CaBigon could be sucked into it as well if it didn't go exactly."

Troi was silent, and she sighed. Every moment, she wanted Riker more and more.

The door chimed. Sharleii turned, and with a bewildered look, he rushed to the doors and ordered the doors to the bedroom closed. They shut, and Troi was left in the darkness.

"Come in!"

Troi could hear muffled voices from beyond the wall, and she frowned. She clenched her legs to her chest, feeling inordinate, taken for granted, and mentally abused. The Romulansâ€|they had taken her away. They had almost stolen her entire life.

The doors to the room suddenly swooshed open, and Riker stood in front of Troi. He had blood over him, but he smiled when he saw Deanna.

"Will!" Deanna gasped, and she painfully came forward and found herself lost in his bear hug.

Sharleii watched, and he just shook his head.

"Deannaâ€|Deannaâ€|.are you okay? What did they do to you?" Riker said as he kissed her hair.

Deanna dug her head in his chest, and she just sighed, "Nothing, Willâ€|I'm okay. Your hurt, lay down."

Deanna and Riker carefully leaned on each other, and Riker laid down. He groaned, and then Sharleii came around the corner.

"Commandor, how did you get here?" Sharleii asked in his official tone. He crossed his arms.

Riker looked up, and Troi sat down on the large bed. She stroked his head with the gentlest caress she could, and Riker took a deep breath, "Sirâ€|Captain, I managed to fight the Romulan with a misplaced foot. The guard was bulky, but he sure as hell couldn't move fastâ€|."

Sharleii showed the evidence of a tiny smile, and he nodded, "Very well."

Troi smiled a little, and she waited.

Kli'el paced the Command center, and he glared at everyone that passed him. It was all their fault, not his. He was flawless, he was Kli'el.

"Damn you all!" Kli'el roared again, and he pounded himself into his chair. He couldn't lose, he just couldn't. He had to prove himselfâ€|against his parents, against all odds.

"We have victim lose, Deck 105!"

"Sir, we are losing control!"

"Sirâ€|we have been hitâ€|"

"Shut up!" Kli'el yelled at the top of his lungs, and then he motioned for the view screen to come on. It came on, and to his horror, he stared at a black wormhole surrounded by an aurora of bluish purple.

"Didn't I say turn around? Didn't I say to turn around?"

"Sirâ€|we can'tâ€|The ship behind us has destroyed our sensors! We have a transport lockâ€|"

"Get themâ€|Hold them back!"

The doors suddenly busted open to Sharleii's quarters, and five large Romulans stood. They all held guns, and they growled as they burst forward.

"Schle-chem!" The largest one resounded, and Sharleii gasped.

"Traitor!" They all seemed to yell at Sharleii, and Sharleii held his hands out.

Troi looked around from the bedroom, and she screamed when she felt their telepathic presence. All of them at once seemed to attack her mind, and she fell back. Riker sat up, and he watched dazed as three of the Romulan ran into their room. Two grabbed Troi, and the other shot Riker as he stared helplesslyâ€|

"Deanna!" Riker shouted, and then he went blank.

"Sir! We have Picard on board. Preparing for other transports," The NCO at the main LCARS said.

Weston nodded, and he directed further, "Shields full power! Fire

photons after we get all of them upâ€|"

"Sir! We are unable to transport Sharleii, Counselor Troi, and Commandor Rikerâ€|"

Weston looked to them with a frantic look of determination, "Why?"

"The Romulans have disabled Riker, and they have gotten Sharleii out of range. Counselor Troi has also been disabledâ€|"

"Get me down there! I'll get them thenâ€|"

"Weston, sir?" The NCO questioned. "That is highly unfeasible."

"Do it, dammit! Get me down there!"

"Yes, sirâ€|" The NCO stated, and then he contacted Engineering.

Weston vanished from the Bridge, and the ship was left in an eerie silence of space.

"No!" Troi screamed, and she kicked her legs as hard as she could. The two Romulans threw her to the floor, and they shot her. Deanna convulsed, and she looked up at them as the sting flew through her body.

"We're gonna make you payâ€|" The Romulan growled, and then he leaned forward. He placed his hand near her neck, and Deanna kicked upward.

The other Romulan came forward as his friend fell back, and he placed a hand on her both shoulders. With a snarl, he leaned forward and smiled cynically.

Deanna snarled, and she screame one last time. With a last burst of energy, she kicked her entire body up, and she bumped heads with him. She felt blood coming from her nose almost immediately, and then a familiar tingle overcame her.

The buzz of the transporter filled her ears, and she glimpsed herself, Sharleii, and Riker being beamed up. As she faded, she reached out to the unfamiliar Admiral standing in the corner, but it was too late.

"I can't get a lock on Weston!" The NCO shouted, and the LCARS buzzed to life. Outside of the screen, the massive Romulan bird was struck twice, almost seconds after Troi, Riker, and Sharleii were saved and beamed aboard CaBigon.

"Get him!" The Commandor of the CaBigon said. "We can't lose Weston! Hold fireâ€|"

Everything went dead silent, and then the Romulan ship seemed as if it was being bent into two. Everyone stared at the screen in total admonishment. The ship was there one moment, and then the gulps of space, the womb of all time, swallowed it. It was gone.

"CaBigon is beginning to be sucked into the hole!"

"Retreat! Retreat!" Almost every officer said, and then full thrust was turned on.

CaBigon creaked and turned around, and then fought against the vacuum. As Warp Drive was initiated, the entirety of the ship tossed and shook violently.

Then, it sped off into the Delta, safe from harm.

Sharleii laid on the Sickbay bed, Riker was to his far left in the corner, and Troi was in surgery. Chief Kess stood over both of them, his face somber.

"Weston? You lost Weston?" Sharleii said, and he tried to sit up. "What in the hellâ€|"

"Hey," Kess said, and he placed his hand on his Uncle's shoulder. "Lie down, Sharleiiâ€|"

"That's Captain Sharleii to youâ€|" Sharleii grumbled, and he laid down. His back was sore, and he rubbed his sore face. His identity finally returned, and Riker's light laughter could be heard.

"You too, stay still," Kess said to Riker, looking over his shoulder.

"Starfleet's going to be disappointed, Kess. We lost Weston. He was an Admiral, a good one. Has any family been notified?"

Kess listened to the Captain, and he prepared a hyospray, "Yes, sir, it's all been taken care of."

"Don't stick that thing in me!" Sharleii snarled, and he frowned. "You shouldn't have beamed me up then. You should have beamed up Weston and left me there."

Kess sighed, and he stuck the hyospray into Sharleii, "That wasn't our orders. Weston ordered us to beam you guys up, and when we couldn't, he went down and got you guys into the right spot to be beamed upâ€|"

"Well, we owe him," Sharleii moaned, and then he felt the effects of the hyospray entering his bloodstream. "Ohâ€|."

Kess managed a small smile, and he whispered, "Night Captainâ€|"

Riker looked over, and he sighed at their conversation. The loss of Weston was a terrible loss, and he too felt the same thing that Sharleii felt.

"Picard, how is Picard?" Riker then stated loudly. He was surprised at his own spontaniuity.

Kess looked up, and he nodded, "Picard is just fine."

Riker sighed with relief, and he leaned over onto his head. But another thought soon occupied his mindâ€|Deanna. Troi was in surgeryâ€|for her wounds. The force of the phasar-weapon had ripped

right into her shoulder, and now she was getting it reconstructed with lasers and planned out skin graphs.

Falling into a light sleep, he dreamt of seeing her again. He had almost lost her, and he vowed never to again.

Troi slowly opened her eyes, and she realized that she was sitting up. She moved around a little, and to her surprise, there was no pain. With a slight yawn, she cleared her vision and groggily looked around. Something heavy was on her hand, and she frowned.

Riker's head laid on it, and his chest was slowly rising in and out. His face was peaceful and content, and he barely moved as she slid her hand from underneath his head.

"Will," she whispered, and her heart felt so overjoyed to see him. There was that link that she felt that overcoming link of passion, of fear, of unity. That link that no matter what, he would always be there for her. If only if only she could wake up and see him everyday like this. To wake up in the morning, and to cling to him during the times of strife and hardships.

"Will, wake up," she whispered a little louder, and Will stirred.

Will's glassy eyes opened slowly, and the orbs of summer blue looked at Deanna. He smiled, and his husky build seemed to lift itself and slid onto her. Deanna hugged him, and he rested his head on her shoulder.

"Imzadi," he whispered, his warm breath soothing her healing shoulder.

Deanna sighed, and she held his head, "Imzadi."

Riker smiled a little more, and he tilted his head up to look at her. Then, leaning forward, he sealed his lips onto hers, sinking into her soul. They became one, one in heart, soul, and mind.

Imzadi don't go!

—

I promise. I won't, and never will.

—

End
file.